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January 25, 2019

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Re: Partial Federal Government Shutdown

Dear President Trump,

On behalf of the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), we write to urge you to find a swift resolution to the partial federal government shutdown. If prolonged, the impacts of the shutdown could bring harm to the nation's most vulnerable and leave many households at risk of falling into homelessness or facing medical emergencies.

LAHSA is a joint powers authority of the City and County of Los Angeles serving as the lead agency in the Los Angeles Continuum of Care (LA CoC). LAHSA is responsible for funding a significant portion of the interim housing, permanent housing, and supportive services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County and works to ensure safe and stable housing for all.

At present, families remain able to access key benefits; including both Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP), which provides critical assistance to vulnerable households to ensure that they do not go hungry, and Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, which ensure that vulnerable households have access to safe and stable housing. Both programs have sufficient funds to continue operations for the remainder of the month, but these programs may face shortfalls and curtailments if the shutdown continues.

As an agency tasked with connecting those experiencing homelessness to services and housing, we are deeply alarmed by the prospect that if the shutdown continues into February, families will be at risk of losing housing and nutrition benefits and faced with difficult choices between putting food on the table, paying the rent, or paying for needed medical care. The Los Angeles Continuum of Care is concerned that the shutdown could drive more families into homelessness, which will greatly increase public sector costs while subjecting already vulnerable people to trauma.

We hope your administration will seek an immediate resolution to fund the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Department of Agriculture as soon as possible to ensure that these human costs do not accrue any further.

Sincerely,

Kelli Bernard
Chair, LAHSA Commission

Peter Lynn
Executive Director

cc: Secretary Sonny Perdue, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Secretary Ben Carson, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Speaker Nancy Pelosi
House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy
Senate Majority Leader Mitchell McConnell
Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer
Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation